3291 Sq. mtr. land by the side of Coal Dock Road, in Kolkata was taken by the A&N Administration on lease in two phases (3180 sq. mtrs. by March, 1993 and 111 sq. mtrs. in July, 1998). It was proposed by the A&N Administration to construct a multi-storeyed transit accommodation having total plinth area of 4940 sq. mtrs. In the first phase it was proposed to construct 2031 sq. mtrs.

Total amount spent so far (upto 11/2002) is Rs. 2,44,72,090/- which includes lease rent, cost of construction of boundary wall and payment towards arbitration.

(c) and (d) The feasibility of operating at least one passenger vessel from Haldia is being examined by A&N Administration on the grounds that it will reduce journey by 15.00 hours, where sailing will not depend on tide cycle and it may reduce costs etc. Transit accommodation is required to be maintained at the Coal Dock Road site, as it will continue to remain the main hub of the shipping activity for these islands.

Vallarpadam Container Terminal project in Kochi

2344. DR. A.R. KIDWAI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has sent a proposal to the Planning Commission seeking support for carrying out dredging work and port and railway connectivity for the proposed Rs. 2,118 crore Vallarpadam Container Terminal at Kochi;

(b) if so, whether the Planning Commission has agreed to provide the necessary assistance;

(c) if so, to what extent the aid has been given for implementing this project; and

(d) by when, this project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIP KUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) to (d) Cochin Port Trust has drawn up an Integrated Development Plan for the port which, *inter-alia*, includes the construction and operation of an International Container Transhipment Terminal (ICTT) at Vallarpadam, capital dredging

of its navigational channels, road connectivity and rail connectivity, to be implemented on public-private partnership basis. The Minister of Finance has, while presenting the Union Budget 2003-04, announced viability gap funding, for the port's comprehensive modernisation project designed to bring it up to international standards, to bridge any possible short-fall between anticipated revenue and loan repayment liabilities. A firmed up proposal seeking budgetary support for the project has not yet been sent to the Planning Commission. However, a token provision of Rs. 1 crore has been allocated in the Annual Plan 2003-04 of the Port Sector for capital dredging at the port pending finalisation of the funding pattern for the project. Since the ICTT Project is to be executed on Build, Operate & Transfer (BOT) basis which involves selection of private operators through open competitive bidding, it would not be possible to indicate the time-frame for completion of the project.

Sand-Heads in Haldia Port

2345. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that sand-heads in the Haldia Port have turned graveyard for the ships;

(b) the details of the cargo and other ships which had sunk during the last six years as a result thereof; and

(c) the details of the other ills afflicting the port causing accidents alongwith the action taken by Government to control such mishaps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIP KUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) There has been occasional sinking of vessels at the Sand-heads away from the navigational channel during the last 133 years of existence of the Kolkata Port and there has been no disruption of shipping movements from/to this port due to such sinking.

(b) During last 6 years, all the vessels that sank at Sand-heads in the approaches to the port of Kolkata were very old and belonged mostly to the East Asian Countries and were not maintained to the level of sea-worthiness. As a result, these vessels failed to withstand the normal